

INFORMATION

AGENDA ITEM: Statewide Information Databases**GENERAL OVERALL PROGRAM UPDATES:****CURRENT STATUS:**A. Conceptual program design for statewide information database licenses.

The conceptual program design, approved at the April Board meeting, was submitted to the California Digital Library for review with the suggestion that the website design and maintenance be approached as a partnership between the Library of California Board and CDL. CDL responded to the California State Library (CSL) staff on July 12 that they had done an extensive analysis on the program design and were requesting a meeting with CSL staff to discuss their “potential interest.”

In addition, a proposal for website development and maintenance has been received from a commercial library consulting and development firm. The proposal is currently being reviewed by staff.

B. Negotiation of Information Database Licenses—Pilot Projects

As described in the February, 1999 State Board agenda materials, five exploratory projects were identified from the Negotiators’ Advisory Task Force (NATF) meeting held in January. The following provides status updates on each project:

1. Explore extending one of the broad-based periodical agreements (UMI, Ebsco, Information Access) from Los Angeles Public Library to the private academic libraries.

STATUS: The Southern California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC), and Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) continue to explore the extension of LAPL’s UMI database contract to the private academic libraries. (UMI has subsequently changed its name to Bell and Howell Information and Learning (BHIL)). In view of State Library staff changes in the licensing program, a meeting was held between the State Library and UMI/BHIL on July 21, 1999 to continue the dialogue on this project.

2. Explore the ability of the public libraries to be added to the existing CSU agreement for *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*.

STATUS: *Encyclopedia Britannica* representatives met with State Library staff and Linda Crowe (Executive Director, BALIS/PLS/SVLS) during the ALA Conference in New Orleans on June 27. The vendor has agreed to offer *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* to all libraries in the state free of charge during the months of September, October, and November. It was agreed that the issues surrounding fiscal agents (i.e. who signs the contract, who collects the payments, and who works with the vendor on the Internet connections, addresses, authentication, etc.) would need to be solved in the interim. It was also agreed that the vendor would be willing to offer the ongoing license to any interested libraries at \$0.35 per qualified user. The vendor is willing to work with multiple contracts (assuming a manageable number of them). Staff is working on the preparation of announcements for this project as well as resolution of the details of implementation.

3. Seek to continue the California Digital Library environmental information project.

STATUS: The California Digital Library (CDL) is currently considering ways to expand the environmental information project (EIP) model. This project incorporates a licensed environmental database along with other environmental material which has been digitized and made available on a closed Website. LSTA funding has partially supported the project for two years and has allowed CDL to offer it to a group of multi-type libraries and test its use in non-academic settings.

A meeting was held on July 23 to discuss the grant and what the next steps should be. The grant funding ends on September 30, 1999 at which time a formal evaluation of the multi-type project will be available.

4. Explore the deployment of an authentication server that would interface between public, special, and non-academic libraries and the California Digital Library.

STATUS: The California Digital Library is currently testing one industry-standard public key authentication mechanism with selected publishers. This testing will yield valuable knowledge for future developments which require that authentication be addressed in the licensing context. Many other developments in this area are being monitored as well.

5. Continue discussion of an expanded pricing agreement for the state with the broad-based periodical vendors.

STATUS: Preliminary discussions have been held between the State Library and Ebsco, the Gale Group (including Information Access Corporation), and Bell and Howell Information and Learning (formerly UMI). The meetings thus far have served to update the vendors on the Library of California licensing program

as well as to discuss the vendor issues of billing, payment collection, authentication, etc. which the licensor agrees to assume in return for pricing concessions from the vendor. Expanding an existing California contract seems to offer the simplest approach to including additional types of libraries in more favorable pricing arrangements. All vendors have agreed in concept to this approach. The barriers to this kind of expansion lie in the absence of a central fiscal agent capable of collecting funds in advance of purchase. The establishment of the regional library networks should afford this capability, not centrally, but nevertheless in a workable sense.

State Library staff attended a meeting with the Gale Group at the ALA Conference in New Orleans on June 26, 1999. Five Gale representatives attended including the President of the Gale Library Group. Several strategies were discussed including consideration of a new Gale product as a trial.

C. Identification of “trial period” database(s) that would be of value to all types of libraries.

The **RAND California** database, selected as the initial trial database in the Library of California program, was offered to the California library community on July 19, 1999. Staff was able to negotiate lengthening the trial so that it ends on July 30, 2000. Thus, libraries will have a full year of database usage, rather than a shortened one necessitated by delays in establishing the contract and website registration. Rand has mounted an initial self-certification screen (at <http://ca.rand.org/subscribe.libca.html>) which describes the trial database offer and allows libraries to establish their interim eligibility for the Library of California and register for the trial database by completing the form online. A CSL staff member will review and monitor the libraries registering for the trial. Reports will be available from Rand which detail the subscribers and the usage. A letter will be mailed to all libraries on the Library of California mailing list and press releases will appear in a variety of places.

D. The Statewide Serials Database Program Survey

A meeting was held on February 1 between representatives of the California State Library and the California Digital Library to discuss the future of the statewide serials database (now called Library of California Periodicals Database (LoCPD)). Currently, alternatives are being considered regarding the architecture of the SSDB database as well as the methodologies employed in bringing the three databases together that result in the LoCPD (CDB-S, CALLS, SERHOLD). Discussion at the meeting established the need for gathering information from the CDB-S contributing libraries relevant to their capabilities to provide update data in machine-readable rather than paper form and for their local systems to be accessed via Z39.50, the holdings formats currently employed, and the current needs for output products from this database in view of the new Web

version. The workflow design of this database product is more than three years old; it needs to be re-examined to re-establish priorities, to continue to evaluate the usage and success of the new Web-based product, and to look at the associated costs of its production. Toward this end, a survey has been prepared and distributed to all participants of the CDB-S. Additional analysis of revised options of all kinds is being undertaken by staff so that the changes in technology and local capabilities can best be utilized in future versions of the LoCPD.

RELATED ISSUES TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE: Status reports on the conceptual licensing program design and website implementation, the information-gathering survey for LoCPD, the preliminary licensing projects, and preliminary reports on subscribers and usage of the RAND California trial database will be presented to the Board at the November meeting.

Relevant Committee: Support Services
Staff Liaison: Ira Bray